undertaking of Department of Telecommunications was allowed to supply the above equipment as per decision of Telecom Commission as Non-supply also would have resulted in loss to Department of Telecommunications.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

Functioning of Internet Exchanges

1934. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that country's first internet exchange has started functioning, but no internet service provider has joined it, till date;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are reconsidering to establish other three exchanges;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken by Government to attract internet service providers to join the internet exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir. Several Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have agreed to join the Internet Exchange Point (IXP) at Noida.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) It has been decided to collocate these IXPs at the premises of the Software Technology Park of India at Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The promotional effort, undertaken by the Department of Information Technology includes organization of training and awareness workshops and seminars and waiving of fee payable by the ISP's for the first six weeks of operations.

Expansion of computers in rural areas

†1935. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme with regard to the expansion of computers in the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 1. The Department of Information Technology (DIT) has taken the following initiatives:

- National Informates Centre Network (NICNET) backbone and e-governance support have been provided to both Central and State Govts. and UT administrations.
- Computerization of the Land Records has been implemented in 2400 taluks in the country.
- Government to Citizens (G2C) application packages relating to Government Schemes, Govt. forms, grievances etc. have been developed in various States.
- Software solutions such as Rural Soft 2000, Rural Bazar, PriaSoft, eNRICH etc. have been developed to address specific problems of rural development.
- Schemes, such as AGMARKNET in all Sates/UTs (750 Wholesale Markets) and Community Information Centres (CICs) in all 487 Blocks of North-Eastern States, including Sikkim

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.